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Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General welcomes Dayton accords to end conflict in former Yugoslavia; says United Nations will do all it can to help end suffering in region.

- United Nations staff member shot dead in apparent robbery in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- General Assembly elects 29 members to UNEP Governing Council and 7 members to World Food Council; adopts resolutions on cooperation between United Nations and League of Arab States and OIC.

- Secretary-General urges General Assembly to adopt ICSC recommendations on remuneration of international staff.

- Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee approves draft resolutions on problems of refugees and displaced persons.

- Committee on Rights of Child concludes tenth session in Geneva with adoption of annual report.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has welcomed the accords reached today in Dayton, Ohio, to end the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. He said that the United Nations would do all it could, within mandates authorized by the Security Council, to help end the suffering and to return life to normal in the region. He thanked United States President Bill Clinton for the peace initiative which brought the parties to the negotiating table.

"The world should, at this time, pay tribute to all those peace-keepers of the United Nations, both military and civilian, who, at great personal cost, helped contain and stabilize the situation until the warring parties could turn from war to peace," the Secretary-General went on to say.

The United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, said that today was a great day for peace, but added that

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a lot of work remained to be done. She told correspondents at Headquarters that concrete steps had to be taken to implement the Dayton accords. She noted that the Security Council had to take action on draft resolutions on the suspension of sanctions and on the lifting of the arms embargo imposed by resolution 713 (1991).

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A United Nations staff member has been killed in the Bosnian town of Tuzla, a spokesman for the Organization announced today. William Jefferson, a United States national, was shot dead by unknown assailants in what is believed to have been a robbery, and not a politically motivated killing. The incident is under investigation.

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The General Assembly today elected 29 members to four-year terms on the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and seven members to three-year terms on the World Food Council. It also appointed five members to serve three-year terms on the Committee on Conferences. All terms will commence on 1 January 1996.

Speakers told the Assembly that the Trusteeship Council's future deserved further study. However, recommendations ranged from complete disbandment of the Council to a new role of holding in trust the common heritage of mankind.

"In our view, the Secretary-General was right when he recommended last year that the Trusteeship Council should be quietly put to sleep forever," the representative of New Zealand said. He recommended that the issue be dealt with by the high-level working group of the Assembly on strengthening the Organization, rather than by the Sixth Committee (Legal).

Yesterday, the Assembly adopted resolutions dealing with cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Under the terms of the first text, the Assembly decided that a general meeting between the United Nations system and the League of Arab States should take place every two years to enhance cooperation between them. The second text requested the United Nations and Organization of the Islamic Conference to continue cooperation in their common search for solutions to global problems.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has urged the General Assembly to adopt, as an immediate priority, the recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) to raise the remuneration of international

staff. He did so yesterday, in an address to the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) on the United Nations common system.

Speaking as the Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), he stressed that the heads of United Nations bodies were concerned that their establishments were no longer competitive in relation to some international organizations and national civil services. Therefore, the common system's conditions of service must be improved to attract and retain the best qualified staff. Although late and insufficient, the salary measures proposed by the ICSC were a first urgent step towards restoring competitiveness.

In the interim, the executive heads had urged the Assembly to endorse the ICSC's recommendation that the salary scale should be restructured to correct existing imbalances in relation to the comparator -- the United States federal civil service. Also, a longer-term strategy should be introduced to ensure that the common system's conditions of service fully reflected the realities of the labour market.

The Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services, Karl-Theodor Paschke, today presented his Office's reports to the Fifth Committee. He said the Office had two distinct roles to play -- to promote better management and to deter corruption, waste, fraud and mismanagement throughout the United Nations system. His priorities included areas where a great deal of money was at stake and where the nature or environment of United Nations activities was particularly risky. Those included peace-keeping missions, humanitarian activities and procurement.

Mr. Paschke stated that the Office of Internal Oversight Services had become a meaningful part of the United Nations management culture and had embraced the principles of geographical balance and of professionalism in its personnel decisions. He added that he was ready to brief the Fifth Committee three to four times a year.

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The Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) today approved a draft resolution that would have the General Assembly request the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to convene a regional conference on the problems of refugees and displaced persons in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and relevant neighbouring States. The Assembly would call on the UNHCR, in consultation with States, relevant international and regional bodies, to consider and develop comprehensive regional approaches to the problems of refugees and displaced persons.

The Committee also approved a draft resolution on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa. By that text, the Assembly would call on the international community to strengthen the emergency

response capacity of the UNHCR on the basis of the emergency experience in Rwanda, and to continue supporting Rwandan refugees and the host countries until a permanent solution could be implemented. By the terms of another draft approved today, the Assembly would urge the UNHCR and other organizations concerned to mobilize resources commensurate with the needs of the unaccompanied refugee minors.

High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata told the Committee yesterday that returning home was the best solution to the problem of refugees. However, in the absence of that possibility, the importance of third country resettlement could not be overlooked. She expressed concern over the decline in the willingness of States to grant asylum, even on a temporary basis. Many countries were openly admitting their weariness with accepting large numbers of refugees seeking asylum, and some were closing their borders.

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The Committee on the Rights of the Child has concluded its tenth session in Geneva with the adoption of its annual report. During the session, the Committee examined reports of six States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child -- Italy, Ukraine, Germany, Senegal, Portugal, Holy See -- and adopted final observations concerning their application of it.

The Committee decided that during its thirteenth session, to be held in Geneva between September and October 1996, it would dedicate a day to a general debate on sexual exploitation and abuse of children.

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